



EXHIBIT 1

DATE 3/24/15

HJ 23

MONTANA SECRETARY OF STATE

LINDA McCULLOCH

HJ 23: Joint Resolution requesting an interim study of Montana Election Process
House State Administration, Rm 455
March 24, 2015 @ 8:00 a.m.
Secretary of State Linda McCulloch's Testimony

- Good morning Mr. Chair, members of the committee. For the record, I am Linda McCulloch, Montana Secretary of State.
- I am here today to support Joint Resolution 23.
- This committee has had before it numerous bills that have been brought forth by the people in this state that run elections with great efficiency, integrity and transparency and who are experts in the election process. When they have come to this body with sound minded and reasonable bill requests they have been met time-and-time again with what seems like little regard which overwhelmingly discredits their knowledge and expertise.
 - I want to stress that the bills that my office and county election administrators bring before you every session are drafted over a two-year period with great thought and with a large amount of work involved. We reach out to stakeholders, we research other states' processes and procedures and we do a thorough legal review of every piece of legislation we propose.
 - I also want to remind this committee that the interim study done in the last interim was for a specific purpose: to study the feasibility of combining school and primary elections. During that study, interim committee members chose to take on much needed standardization of election dates and deadlines for various types of local elections. Never was House Bill 84, the result of the last interim, meant to study election processes and procedures. Furthermore, there were not conflicts that we are aware of in proposed legislation from this office or from the county election administrators with House Bill 84.
- I firmly believe that Montana has some of the most fair, accessible, transparent, secure and accurate elections in the nation, if not in the world. However, misinformation, misinterpretation, and maybe even mistrust have contributed to

some bills being killed that would improve the election process and help election administrators and voters.

- This interim study will create a much needed and welcome opportunity to showcase the current processes and procedures; and to educate and clear up any misconceptions for interim committee members, and I think that will translate to further consideration of bills to improve and make more efficient our election processes.
- I ask for your support for Joint Resolution 23 and look forward to a robust and mutually rewarding interim study of Montana's election processes.